Mazda Streamlines Accounting Through SAP Integration & Web Functionality

Headquartered in Irvine, California, Mazda North American Operations oversees the sales, marketing, parts and customer service support of Mazda vehicles through nearly 900 dealers. The Accounting Department was challenged with processing nearly 17,000 invoices per year on a 13-year-old ERP system. In 2004 Mazda made the decision to transfer their accounting functions to SAP to increase process efficiencies and reduce costs. Wanting to engage advancements in technology, Mazda's leadership directed the IT department to fully utilize web functionality whenever possible.

**Timeline Critical in Move to SAP**
Mazda wanted the SAP system up and working several months prior to the new fiscal year. Sizeable labor and fiscal allocations to the SAP conversion motivated Mazda's IT department to keep the imaging and workflow upgrade on schedule. To guarantee the projected deadline was met, Mazda turned to ImageSource®, and their outstanding team of professionals.

"The fact that ImageSource is certified by SAP gave us confidence they would meet our critical deadline to get the new ERP system up and running. Their Ilinx technology was the key element to a seamless integration which maximized our ROI."
Kevin Luck, Business Systems Analyst, IT Division, Mazda North American Operations

More Transactions with Fewer Resources
The SAP integration can easily capture, route, store and retrieve documents, images, and data associated with transactions. SAP users are able to view the actual document, in addition to the data within the system.

A Mazda employee fills out a form in IBPM, setting in motion the workflow in the requisition for a purchase order, check request, wire payment or expense report. Using Fujitsu’s imaging
hardware, an invoice is scanned into Kofax Ascent Capture and QA’d. It is then linked with the original requisition PO, going through automated tolerance checks. Once verified and approved by the requestor, the invoice is sent to SAP accounts payable for remittance.

The integration has allowed Mazda employees to process more transactions with fewer resources. Mazda currently handles invoice processing that requires routing for more than 600 confirmations or approvals daily. Sophisticated workflow functionality allows information/documents to be delivered to the appropriate person for timely approval.

Process improvements mean that it can now take less than three days from receipt of invoice to SAP processing.

**Flexibility, Speed and Ease of Use**

ImageSource’s solution allowed Mazda to utilize a web-based platform, improving processing speed and ease of use. Built-in flexibility allows for additional workflows to be easily deployed. The solution addressed the following objectives:

- Reduce maintenance/system administration through simplified workflow, streamlined system and merged forms
- Improve speed of searches and other business processes
- Enhance quality of data entered and captured
- Allow users to independently find status of packages through a status search option
- Reduce labor to process invoices by adding function to track line-item deductions against PO’s balance

**Web Functionality Provides Accessibility**

The second phase encompassed a complete system upgrade, including the move to Oracle IPM 7.6 and Kofax Ascent Capture 7. ImageSource ILINX® Release Script replaced the existing release script, providing out-of-the-box functionality for Mazda to customize without writing code.

ImageSource designed a web-based architecture that increases efficiencies through improved automation and intelligent delivery of business documents enterprise-wide. Now over the Web, the traditional corporate environment is expanded, providing accessibility to anyone, anywhere. Beyond the immediate benefits, this infrastructure can be leveraged economically for future technology implementations.

**Streamlined Functionality and Processes**

Restricted by the number of line-items on requisitions in the old system, ImageSource created additional databases that permit unlimited line-items on a single requisition form. The databases also reduced duplication of data in the system.

Through the use of profiles, the number of queues has been consolidated, making the workflow easier to maintain.

And a universal search option has been added, which allows users to independently search for the status of requisitions, and see where they are in the workflow process.

**Expense Reporting Made Quick & Simple**

Leveraging the web-based system further, it is capable of facilitating expense reporting and subsequent workflow. The old, manual process took well over two weeks. Through the use of workflows, employees can submit expense reports electronically from any location and have it approved by a manager via workflow. Typically, reimbursement will take just 2-3 days.

**Substantial Reduction in Support Services**

The old environment required multiple desktop installations, including custom applications providing forms and ODBC’s. Maintenance to keep up with inherent shifting within the corporate environment was constant. Now on the Web, outsourced maintenance and support services have been dramatically reduced, resulting in far less downtime and improved productivity.

**Partnership Provides Exponential Returns**

The superior functionality provided by the ImageSource solution has enabled Mazda to improve business processes enterprise-wide.

“Beyond defining our basic objectives, the architecture, concept and design for getting things moving on the back-end was greatly due to ImageSource’s planning,” says Kevin Luck. “They’re an invaluable part of our technological advancement.”